



June 27, 2011

Dear Colleague,

The number of children being cared for by grandparents has grown by more than 10% over the past decade, census data shows. Most of these grandparents and other relative caregivers will tell you they gain great joy from their role. But they also face financial, health, housing, education and work challenges that often foil their retirement plans. These new figures magnify the need for more supports, resources and services for these "grandfamilies" so they can more effectively do this important service to their families, and to our country, while building their own security for the future.

For many of these grandparents, Social Security is the main source of income, and supports the multi-generational family. There is a serious threat to lower Social Security benefits, cut the cost of living, and raise the retirement age in Washington. At the same time, Arizona's government has chosen to face the fiscal crisis with the "solution" that services and assistance for grandparents raising grandchildren have been cut or are threatened to be cut. These cuts in the budget are not aimed specifically at seniors, but will result in economic hardship for multi-generational families

Please accept this invitation to join the Arizona Grandfamily Economic Security Taskforce. Through a combination of advocacy and education, our goal is to positively impact the lives of grandparents raising their grandchildren.

We are looking statewide for organizations to join us in a one-day work session, to be held in Phoenix on August 15. The work session goals include:

1. Develop and disseminate a letter, endorsed by the Taskforce participants, to send to the Governor and Legislature that will encourage support for grandparents raising grandchildren from an economic security perspective which outlines the issues and the negative impacts cuts will have on families.
2. Develop a fact sheet/brochure that will help grandparents raising grandchildren find resources in their community.

With your expertise, we can assure that Arizona's grandfamilies are economically secure. Contact Tory Anderson by e-mail at AZRetiredAmericansFund@gmail.com or by phone at 623-570-6396 to learn more.

Sincerely,

Doug Hart,
President